

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS LJUBLJANA 000247

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT. FOR EUR/NCE, EUR/PGI, G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PREL SI

SUBJECT: GOVT. OF SLOVENIA FINDS RESOURCES TO KEEP TIP NGO GOING

REF: HYLAND-TOPPING EMAIL 3/31

1.(SBU) Summary. On 31 March, Post first became aware of budgetary problems for the NGO Kljuc - the Government of Slovenia's primary partner in the fight against trafficking in persons (TIP), through a press release from Kljuc. The press report stated that Kljuc had not received funding guaranteed by the Government of Slovenia's national action plan against trafficking in persons. Post alerted Washington (Ref) to this potential problem and began work to determine how/if the GOS could resolve it in a timely manner. Stop-gap measures are now being taken. The Ministry of Justice has transferred SIT one million (\$5,500) to Kljuc and we have been assured that the Ministry of Interior is depositing the same amount in Kljuc's account today. We expect the Ministry of Labor to follow suit. This will tie Kljuc over until the "rebalancing" of the budget is completed in May, when Kljuc should become fully funded. End Summary

2. (SBU) Post first became aware of funding problems for Slovenia's primary anti-trafficking NGO, Kljuc, via a press statement on March 31, 2005. (Note: The statement suggested that Kljuc leadership had been informing Embassies of its problems, but post had not been contacted by Kljuc prior to the release.) Initial inquiries to key members of the Inter Ministerial Working Group (IWG) on TIP elicited comments of continuing, strong support for the TIP program, with the caveat, however, that the entire government was having cash flow issues due to budgetary problems, which should be solved by May when Kljuc would be fully funded.

3.(SBU) Three ministries are expected to support Kljuc: Interior, Justice, and Labor. According to the GOS Action Plan: "Operating costs amount to SIT 27 million per year. The resources are exploited for concrete assistance to trafficked victims, the operation of the (safe) house, engagement of the Social Work Centers when appropriate, and reintegration of trafficked persons. The gap in funding shall be filled in by the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs, each contributing and equal share of SIT 9 million per year."

4.(SBU) The Ambassador then made calls to the Deputy Foreign Minister Bozo Cerar, Minister of Interior Dragutin Mate, and Slovenia's Ambassador in Washington Samuel Zbogor to reinforce the urgency with which this funding issue needed to be addressed. It was in nobody's interest that Kljuc close its doors due to lack of short-term funding. Putting it into a larger context, the Ambassador emphasized that anti-trafficking is considered an extremely important bilateral and multilateral issue by the USG. We had invested a great deal in promoting anti-trafficking programs in Slovenia, through Kljuc and other agencies, and we have a strong interest in protecting and promoting that investment.

5. (SBU) In two conversations with the Ambassador, Interior Minister Mate explained that the GOS was fully committed to its anti-trafficking plan, and that he, too, had been surprised to hear of the budgetary crunch of Kljuc. Mate also blamed the previous government for not putting the money for anti-trafficking in the 2005 budget it had prepared. Ultimately, Mate committed to finding the money to keep Kljuc going, saying it was more important to keep the shelter open than to worry about rankings in a report - the GOS was fully committed to this goal. A day later, he called the Ambassador with the news that his ministry was transferring the equivalent of \$5,500 to Kljuc on April 13.

6. (SBU) A subsequent conversation between the Ambassador and Deputy Foreign Minister Cerar resulted in the following GOS formal statement:

"The Republic of Slovenia supports the NGO Kljuc and provides it with all necessary assistance in carrying out the projects laid down in the Action Plan to Fight Human Trafficking 2004-2006. The NGO Kljuc is entitled to receive all the required funds for the project "Trafficking in Human Beings Victim's Care" in 2005. First, the advance amount will be paid; with the remaining funds being paid after the budget approval procedures are completed."

17. (SBU) Comment: This is a typical example of the stove-piping of information and policy guidance that occurs within the Government of Slovenia. The irony is not lost on us that on the very day we were brow-beating the GOS to make good on its commitment to fund anti-trafficking programs, Foreign Minister Rupel was talking to the press about Slovenia's desire to use the OSCE to showcase anti-trafficking initiatives. Additionally, Slovenia will be hosting a large, international, anti-trafficking seminar in late June. There is much blame to go around for the current

state of affairs, the new GOS was perhaps not aware of the importance of this particular commitment made by the previous GOS; perhaps the previous GOS did not, in fact, work Kljuc funding into the 2005 budget; and Kljuc waited too long before getting us involved, and in fact never directly approached us for help, but clearly was expecting the Embassy to carry its water with the GOS.

18. (SBU) The decision on whether Slovenia earns a Tier 1 or Tier 2 ranking in this year's TIP report is up to decision makers in Washington. It has been a bumpy week getting the new GOS to this point, and we suspect it had neither focused on TIP as a priority issue, nor fully appreciated just how aggressive we would be, once we learned the core of the plan appeared to be at risk. The concrete transfers of funds combined with the very explicit statement from the GOS, give us confidence that at senior levels of the GOS, there is every intention to follow through on commitments made by the previous government to combat trafficking in persons. End Comment.
ROBERTSON

NNNN

2005LJUBLJ00247 - Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

v1.6.2